

Candidate Pack



More than Grandparents
Supporting kinship families

Who loves me?



By
More Than Grandparents
a Kinship Carers Group
in Sunderland



Join our Board!

More than Grandparents supports kinship families – both adult carers, and children in care. A 'kinship family' is the term used when a grandparent or friend steps in to raise another person's children, often because the biological parent is unable to look after the child themselves.

More than Grandparents offer a range of support, from creche facilities to counselling, educational programming, and food deliveries.

Demand has doubled in the last 24 months and the charity now supports 219 kinship carers and 273 kinship children.

We are seeking to appoint up to 3 new trustees who have an interest in supporting small charities that are working to positively impact kinship families.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of their age, disability, ethnicity, heritage, sexuality, gender and socio-economic background.

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About More Than Grandparents

More than Grandparents supports kinship families – both adult carers, and children in care. The service is run almost entirely by volunteers. A 'kinship family' is the term used when a grandparent or friend steps in to raise another person's children, often because the biological parent is unable to look after the child themselves. Local authorities have no statutory responsibility to offer financial support to kinship families, and often the children in these families have complex emotional and behavioural needs that kinship carers struggle to cope with.

More than Grandparents offer a range of support, from creche facilities to counselling, educational programming, activities to promote positive attachments and build trust, home essential care packs, a food bank and food deliveries to kinship families living in poverty. Many of the beneficiaries tell the charity that it's service is fundamental to their being able to cope. Without the support, many of the children in their care would be sent away to adoption services.

Most carers More than Grandparents support are over 60, and face having to raise children as young as 2 or 3 years old, or young teenagers. Compounding their difficulties is poverty – nationally, 76% of kinship families live in poverty; the percentage is even higher in the North East of England. Covid-19 has caused even more suffering for those we support – children have been off school, unable to see their friends, and the adults have therefore had no respite, having to support their children all day, every day.

Demand for our service has doubled in the last 24 months, and requests from kinship families for food bank support have increased threefold as a result of Covid-19 and the financial pressure it has caused. More than Grandparents now support 219 kinship carers and 273 kinship children, and referrals keep coming in. Almost all service users live in Sunderland and County Durham.

Funding and Financial Management

Due to Covid-19 More than Grandparents total income has quadrupled from 31st March 2020 of £25k to £110k in 31st March 2021. 60% of the income for 31st March 2021 was made up of three donors, the largest being a grant for covid support of £35,418. Currently there is no recurring funding and relies heavily on funding applications. However, due to the increase in size of the charity, larger bids with funding over a number of years are currently being applied for.

Charity Structure

More than Grandparents began as a peer support group ran by Kinship carers to support other kinship carers who share similar experiences and difficulties . It became a charitable incorporated organisation on 31st May 2017 and a registered charity with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, so it could begin developing its work further and build sustainability and resilience into the organisation for the benefit of our stakeholders. The charity has one paid employee, the CEO and 5 volunteers. There is currently a funding bid in progress that would support the hiring of a second member of staff. The current Trustee Board has five members, most of whom are service users or have lived experience of kinship care.

Governance

Trustee Board meetings are bi-monthly except in August , currently in February, April, June, October and December. Trustee meetings are currently on a the first Monday of the month around lunchtime and last for no more than two hours. There is a set agenda for each meeting which members can add to if required. Dates and times of meetings can be discussed and negotiated where trustees are balancing other commitments. Meetings are generally held face to face, but on-line video, and telephone are also used.



What we are looking for

Due to accelerated growth we now need to increase our Board of Trustees. More Than Grandparents are looking to increase the number of Trustees by up to 3 people, one of which will fill the vacancy for a Treasurer.

Our Trustees are at the centre of our governance structure, working alongside our Chief Executive, Melanie Nichols, to steer the organisation in achieving its charitable aims; and setting its on-going strategic objectives. The charity will be developing its strategic plan for 2023 – 2028 in 2022 and therefore as a Trustee you will play a key part in this.

As a Trustee on our Board you will be passionate about making a positive difference to the lives of kinship families in the North East. In particular we're looking to meet individuals who have significant knowledge, experience and skills in at least one of the following specialisms:



Finance



Legal



Social Care



Marketing



Technology

We are also interested in any individuals who relish a challenge and applications are welcome from all walks of life as we want to expand the diversity of our board. Applications with the following will be of interest:

Previous experience as a Trustee – To help us grow we need experienced members of the public to join our Board. The current Board of Trustees is made up by a majority where this is their first Trustee role.

Knowledge of the world we live and work in – we have set out to be a peer led organisation with 90% of our board being service users of the charity or having experience of kinship families, as we believe this sets us apart from other national kinship charities. An individual who is a kinship carer or comes from a background which understands kinship family arrangements would add value to the charity as we set out with our ambitious plans for the future.

The ideal applicant will be able to demonstrate the following:

- A commitment to More Than Grandparents
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- Strategic vision
- Good, independent judgement
- Confidence to speak their mind
- An understanding and acceptance of the legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team



The Role of a Trustee

- Ensuring that the organisation pursues its stated objects (purposes), as defined in its governing document, by developing and agreeing a long-term strategy
- Ensuring that More Than Grandparents complies with its governing document (Articles of Association), charity law, and any other relevant legislation or regulations
- Ensuring that More Than Grandparents defines its goals and evaluates performance against agreed targets
- Safeguarding the good name and values of More Than Grandparents
- Ensuring the effective and efficient administration of the charity, including having appropriate policies and procedures in place
- Ensuring the financial stability of the charity and compliance with statutory accounting requirements
- Protecting and managing the property of the charity and ensuring the proper investment of the charity's funds
- Following proper and formal arrangements for the appointment, supervision, support, appraisal and remuneration of the Chief Executive.

In addition to the above statutory duties, each trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the board of trustees reach sound decisions. This may involve scrutinising board papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues, providing advice and guidance on new initiatives, or other issues in which the trustee has special expertise.

The role is unpaid, but out of pocket expense (including travel) that are necessarily incurred in fulfilling the Trustee role, will be reimbursed by the charity upon submission of an appropriately completed expenses form.



How to Apply

You will need to be eligible to be a charity trustee. Trustee appointments are subject to satisfactory references and, upon appointment, a satisfactory Enhanced DBS check and the undertaking of a Safeguarding course, usually online and within 2 months of appointment.

Please send a copy of your CV and the application form which should outline your interest in the vacancy and your relevant background, skills and experience to: melanienichols@morethangrandparents.com marked for the attention of Amber Hill, Cranfield Trust Consultant. If you would like to discuss the vacancies then please contact Melanie Nichols, CEO, on 0191 5140554

Once the application form has been received, the potential applicant will be contacted by Amber Hill, who is supporting the charity through the recruitment process, for an informal telephone discussion. Shortlisted applicants will then have a meeting with the Chair of Trustees and the Chief Executive.

Application deadlines

5pm on Friday 21st January 2022. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview (in Sunderland) week commencing 31st January 2022. Successful candidates will formally appointed to the board at the February meeting, 7th February 2022.

